

*"Pretty Fair View of the Eliphent"*

OR,

TEN LETTERS BY CHARLES G. HINMAN  
WRITTEN DURING HIS TRIP OVERLAND FROM  
PROVELAND, ILLINOIS, TO CALIFORNIA  
IN 1849 AND HIS ADVENTURES IN  
THE GOLD FIELDS IN  
1849 AND 1850

*Edited by*

COLTON STORM



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## *Introduction*

To see the elephant" was a common expression in the United States from the eighteen-forties through the seventies. At first, it meant to see the world and gain worldly experience; later it was applied specifically to a trip to the California gold fields. The phrase was occasionally used during the Civil War, in the past tense, when one had been in battle. The overland migration of 1849 from the Mississippi River to California was, in every sense of the phrase, a great experience, and nearly all of those thousands of men, women, and children who took part in it had "a pretty fair view of the Elephant."

Dale L. Morgan, in commenting on the quantity of material in print about the Gold Rush, concluded that though the mass of information is large, "much painstaking investigation will have to be undertaken, and any fortunate finds made, before we can feel that at any point we are approaching the limits of the subject." The present publication is a record of a "fortunate find" of a series of ten letters written on the trail to California and from the gold fields by an Illinoisan in 1849 and 1850. We hope the scholar who writes the definitive story of the 1849 Gold Rush will find something of value here.

Charles G. Hinman, the writer of this series of letters, was born in Connecticut on November 2, 1808, 1810, or

rom St. Joseph on May 3, 1849, and the last from California on February 17, 1850. Through February and March, 1850, Hinman and his associates had made a great fortune and they may never have "struck it rich." Some time before September 1853, Hinman returned from California to Groveland, for on May 27, 1854, a second son was born to Sarah and Charles and named Edward B. Hinman. The family continued to live in Groveland for awhile and the senior Hinman was Supervisor of the Township of Groveland in Tazewell County in 1855. Four years later he had established the first carriage and wagon factory in Hawleyville, Page County, Iowa. Hawleyville, one of the earliest towns established in the county, is located seven miles northeast of Clarinda. It was then a flourishing town, but the railroad passed it by and it dwindled.

Charles G. Hinman lived in Hawleyville until his death on August 27, 1868. He is listed with his family on the 1860 Census, in which his occupation is given as carriage maker. His factory is not mentioned in the *Iowa State Gazetteer* for 1865. Sarah H. Hinman died at Clarinda in 1877. In 1865, at Hawleyville, Edwin Henshaw of Clarinda married Hannah Hinman, one of the two little girls whose portraits appear as a frontispiece to this volume. In 1872, after Hannah's death, Edwin Henshaw married Hellen Hinman, the other little girl on the frontispiece, and they lived in Des Moines. Josephine had married Joseph Lyford in 1855 and remained in Illinois. Charlotte probably died young. Charles S. Hinman, to whom one of the letters in the series was written is listed in both the 1860 and 1870 censuses as a farmer at Hawleyville; later he lived in

Clarinda. His son, Royal G. Hinman, to whom the letters were given, moved to Omaha, where he lived from 1897 to 1936.

Only the years of Hinman's "view of the Eliphent" interest us, however, and the records of his great adventure are adequate. The journal, a manuscript of fifty pages, comprises a day-by-day account of miles traveled, scenery observed, the character of the water and grass available, the weather, etc. It is, for the most part, an impersonal record. The series of ten letters printed here is a good, personal record of an 1849 overland trip. The record is one of neither insuperable obstacles nor thrilling moments of danger; it is simply an account of how most of the thirty thousand emigrants traveled from the Mississippi to California during the summer of 1849. The tale is well told, even though Hinman's spelling and punctuation are erratic. I have retained both the original spellings and the strange capitalizations of words, but because the punctuation is so baffling in many places, I have re-punctuated the entire series of letters. A few duplicated words have been omitted; several words or parts of words (those which appear between square brackets) have been supplied. They are missing from the letters either because the writer neglected to write them out or because they were torn from the paper when the wax wafer which sealed the letter was broken. Footnotes have been kept to a minimum, since almost everything in the letters is self explanatory.

All of the letters except the third are addressed to Mrs. Sarah G. Hinman, Groveland, Tazewell County, Illinois. The address leaf with postal markings is present



in each case except one. The third letter is addressed to the writer's son, Charles S. Hinman.

Mr. Graff's advice and encouragement were invaluable in the preparation of this introduction and the notes for the text. To all those generous friends who found answers to questions go the warmest thanks of the editor,

COLTON STORM



St Joseph, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1849.

Dear Sarah:

I received yours yesterday, by Hughs,<sup>1</sup> and was much Gratified to learn that you all are in so Good Health. I commence a letter to day because I have a little spare Time. Yesterday we was verry Buisey packing Flour, Cleaning up &c. Our Bacon has not come yet. It will in a day or two; then we shall have a muss<sup>2</sup> again, and get across the River as soon as posable as the Feed for Oxen is better and we are less liable to sickness on the other side. There is some colera<sup>3</sup> and Small Pox here. I do not Fear it however. I go wherever duty or Buisness calls me. Hughes had an Attack of Cholera on the Boat, but has almost recovered. Our mode of Life will make him Hearty. Crandall of Peoria lost one of his men of Cholera by the name of Kingsley. Another Boat that came in to this port at the same time they did lost Eleven men from St Louis up with the same disease.

You wish to know how I enjoy myself. Just imagine yourself in my situation and under the same circumstances, and your Immagination will answer [the] Question. We have had some disagreeable wether, some bad Roads and Weary Limbs since we left, but not any thing to what we expect too. I have been into but 3 Houses except Burtons<sup>4</sup> since I left. I am getting used to the Lin<sup>5</sup> Boards for Fethers. My shoulders and hip

Bones complained a little at first, but I have slept on nothing but the Ground or boards with one Blanket under me since I left. I should be glad to see you all, but my stakes are set for Two Years. I think I fully realize my situation. I know that my path is, and will be, surrounded with dangers, But I do not fear to Die, and if it is the will of Providence that I shall not return, I hope I shall cheerfully submit.

Chum<sup>6</sup> is Quite a Favorite. I heard the Sunday I went to Peoria that a Capias<sup>7</sup> was out for me, but I staid til Monday 10 oclock and heard no more of it and saw no more of Chums Claimants. I Concluded that Barns had turned his attention to Hughes and since Hughes arrival I find it was the case. But I was a little fearful I should meet Him at Canton. I got to Canton just at Night and staid til next morning.

It has just commenced Raining (9 oclock) I think for all day. If it continues I may fill this sheet; if I do I will write again before I leave. A few Lines from Mr Breden in yours was verry acceptable, but I am sorry if my comeing away on Sunday Causes Him difficulty. And as for Walker and others of his stamp, I care as little for them as I do for Barns, and although I firmly believe the Prayers of the Righteous availeth much, I as firmly believe the Five dollars H. Hancock gave me will avail me more in going throug my Journey than the Prayers of Walker and the whole Cabinet on Deacon St would for two Years. Give my Respects to Breden and Wife and all others that you know I do Repect.

Hughes sayes my second Girl expects a Pony. I shall bring them all something Fine if they are Good and

ry to help their Mother. I will leave it to your discretion to send to school or not, if you think it right under the circumstances and feel Able to send I have no objection. Your Letter by Hughes is all I have received since I left Home, but I thought some others would write. Gay promised He would.

Jackman<sup>8</sup> and Horrace<sup>9</sup> are in good Health and have got another Partner. The OBrien<sup>10</sup> Boys stand the Trip so far well. Jackman and I will subscribe for the St Joseph Gazette for six months. One of the Editors is going across the Plains this Spring and will Report back and we think that we can not spend 50<sup>cts</sup> each that will ratify our Families more than by sending them the paper. We will send it to Sam but you will be Entitled to one half of it.

As near as I can Judge from the information I can get there will be about 50,000<sup>11</sup> People attempt to cross the Plains this season. There is 12 crossing places on the Missouri. I think about 1400 Teams will cross at this Place; about 500 have crossed allredy. I think about one  $\frac{1}{3}$  of those who start to go through will back out. A great many are doing so now, and about  $\frac{1}{3}$  will die. They deserve too before they start and some of them are dying. A large majority of the Californians are desperate Fellows and they practice most all kinds of crime, and of course they will, in many instances, pay the Penalty before they get through.

We have been as regular in our Habits as circumstances would allow. [We] are generly in Bed about 8 clock. I weighed the day I left Peoria 135 lbs. I stepped on the scales when I got here and weighed almost 141 making a gain of nearly 6 lbs in 4 weeks. I lay it to the

good cakes my Female Friends furnished me with. Shall not forget them when I get to the Gold dust. The cakes lasted nearly 3 weeks. We had just got out of Flour and Hams as Hughes come. You can judge of our Appetite when you think of 3 of us Eating in 4 weeks 100 lbs Flour, 100 lbs Hams, Bacon, and Beef, with what Eggs and Potatoes we wanted, the cakes you saw, and a Bag full Mrs OBrien sent. But our Labor and Fatigue have been some. We missed it in sending by Water. There is 3 steam mills here. Flour four dollars the Barrel, Bacon smoked four dollars pr-hundred cheaper than we bought at Home, and more things than we had Dreamed of, and as cheap as Hughs bought in St Louis.

We shall try to get across the river this week, but shall not make a final start short of a week or 10 days. It is about 60 miles of Timber and Prairie to the Plains and they are 13 or 1400 miles across, and then about 7 or 800 miles through the Mountains. The 357 miles we have come we consider but a small beginning. I shall continue my Travels to Charly, evry oportunity, and if I should not Live to return, He may not be sorry if He keeps them. Tel Damy I shall not forget Her Kindness. I hope your Letter will come before I start. I think if you write by the 1<sup>st</sup> July, if I get through at all, it will be as soon as the Letter will.

I[t] is about clearing off though & we will have a shower towards Night. It is now about Noon. I am writing on one of Crandalls stoves [which] we brought to our camp for Him Yesterday. His Teams have not come in yet; [he] is looking for them to day. About 100 Teams at the Ferry all the time. As soon as one is gone

his place is filled. 2 Boats running take across 40 Teams  
in 12 hours and they run all Night. I have to close. Will  
write again. Promised Charley<sup>12</sup> to give a description  
of a chiefs dress but [not] now.

I shall go or send to Town to day and will have this  
on the way. Have not Time to look it over. Guess,  
when you find a mistake.

I am much gratified with the Childrens Gifts. Shall  
keep them. Ben says he is going down Town. I tel him  
hold on and I will send this by him, and he is waiting.

Your's only

C. G. Hinman

The most that Troubled me on the Road was the  
Fear of Bad news from Home, when I would get here.  
I Feared for Your Health.

Think every Night of a thousand things to write, but  
forget them now. But may you be Blessed and pre-  
served til I return is the Wish of Your affectionate  
Husband

C. G. Hinman

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St. Joseph, May 8<sup>th</sup> 1849.

Dear Wife:

I learned from Mr Hains last night that you was well  
the 25<sup>th</sup> April. He received a Letter from his Wife.  
Haines and Crandall and all my acquaintance are  
receiving Letters from their friends and Families, but  
the one Hughes brought is all I have received since I  
left Home. As St Joseph is the last place that I can



receive Letters for many months I did think some of my Friends (if not my Family) would write to me, but I have been to the office every other day and as often am disapointed and I can not but co[n]clude where there is so much indifference about writing there must be as much about hearing from me.

Where I shall be, or on what Route, when you receive this God only knows. The Pioneers<sup>13</sup> are holding a meeting now at 2 oclock on a mound near the River. Some are for going the Santa Fe Route (and I am convinced, in view of the Great numbers that have gone the Route we are on) that the Santa Fe is the route we ought to take, but Hughes sayes he will not go that route. He wants to back out but wants us to pay him the money down. We have offered him our Notes with Interest, but he will not take them. He pours down cholera drops, camphor, Laudnum, Brandy, or something all the time, which would make any of us sick, and my opinion is he will not Live to get through if he attempts it, but he will not attempt it. He only wants an excuse, and if we go the Santa Fe route it will be an excuse. He was so Frigtened he staid in St Louis only long enough to buy our Sugar, Coffee, and Rice. He left the Bacon with one man, gave money to another to buy Sea Bread, to another to buy soap and candles, and what little Freight he brought with him is all we have received. We shall wait one day more and if they dont come we shall buy here and go on and loose them. From what Garrett and Crandall of Peoria told me he has not the Nerve to stand the Journey and perils. [He] cried all one day on the Boat for Fear he should die.

We are about the 20<sup>th</sup> Team from the Ferry; yester-



day morning the 70<sup>th</sup>. We crowd up as fast as [we] can. 300 Teams [are] waiting to get over.

A Boat was to leave for St Louis about sun down and as Holland of Washington<sup>14</sup> had Freight below, he said he would go down and see about it and ours. But just as the Boat was leaving, he came and told me he could not go and I must go. I had but just time to snatch up my coat and get on board before she left. 65 miles to Weston<sup>15</sup> by Water, 30 by Land. Got in there the next morning at 8 oclock and found our Bacon and Sea Bread was shipt the night before. And now to get back. The Stage had left and but one Boat in, and she had lost over 40 passengers with the cholera since she left St Louis. She was crowded full and I thought I would take the Land Route. Started on foot at 9 oclock and got to St Joes at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5 with confident expectation of finding a Letter as it was the day for the mail, but I was doomed to be dissapointed, and I will not attempt to paint to You my feelings or how much I felt hurt that I must go from here and not be noticed by a single one that I left behind.

I found my mess across the River and 6 miles out, a good dayes walk for me. Crandall, Hains and others in No 32 have withdrawn from the pioneers and started for Santa Fe. Was sorry to part with Hains. Not likely I see him again unless it be in Illinois. Hughes has laid in the Tent all day while we have been packing our Loading. He has mixed the Bread for us once only, and when we travel rides in the waggon. What we shall do with him I dont know.

It [is] now nearly Night. Ben<sup>16</sup> is going to St Joes for a few thing[s] and I can send this in by him. To morrow



we start again, and before another Eastern mail gets [here] I shall be far beyond the reach of it. The ballan[ce] of the pioneers are here and will Travel to gether. I am writing on a Barrel head and it [is] rough and uneaven. Dont know as you [will] be able to make out what I write. I think I shall occasionally write to Charley, but when I write with the expectation of getting an answer it will be to some one that I think will answer it. We have had a hard dayes work and I cant write as much as I would be glad to. Ben is ready to go and I must stop, and it may be I have censured you to much allready for not writing, but you should immagine yourself in my circumstances and think whether you would like to hear from your family. I send my respects to all and Love to Yourself and Children.

Cha<sup>s</sup>. G. Hinman

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Fort Childs,<sup>17</sup> May 27<sup>th</sup> 1849.

Dear Son:

I have had oportunities to send Letters but no time to write them. Until we left St Joes we was verry buisey preparcing to leave and settleing with Hughes &c. We gave Hughes our Notes with Interest payable when we return, allowed him for all he said he had paid, though he had no receipts to show that he had paid any thing, 5 dollars he said he gave to Philips<sup>18</sup> to buy candles and soap with, but we have not seen Philips, candles, nor soap, but we allowed it, and then we gave 3 dollars to have him carried back to St Joes and glad to get him off our hands so. I get along with Ben and Jesse first

Charles G. Hinman - 1849

Groveland, Illinois - April 2, 1849

April 29 Started this morning and went into St Joes 7 miles Ben and Rhodes  
 256 returned about 9 last and Reported that our Freight had not come.  
 11 The road this morning was Hilly but good country within 2 or 3 miles  
 12 of St Joes about 1/3 in cultivation, the most of the ballance too  
 16 uneven to cultivate to advantage. a Small Prairie this side the  
 16 River the River the opposite side Timbered 4 miles before we find  
 21 Prairie. not haveing been through St Joes but little I will wait  
 18 the description of it til Some other time we are now 1 mile East of  
 7 the Town in camp waiting for our Freight, it is a pleasant day.  
 357 distance from Peoria Ill. to St Joseph Mo 3 57

30 A clear cold day. After Breakfast went to Town the River 1/2 mile above  
 Town nearly East then turns South 1-1/2 then West, the Town is on the East  
 Side, on a Small Prairie the uper end of Town is on very Broken land the  
 mounds are verry high, and of all Shapes. Some are Round and some are long  
 with one side cut Square off like Snow drifts, the Court House Stands on the  
 top of a high mound, and is a Splendig Building the Town has over 4000  
 Inhabitants. it does not Show as large as Peoria, as in consequence of the  
 unevenness of the ground it can not all be seen at once. The Buildings are  
 mostly Stone from 2 to 6 ft above the Ground, the ballance Brick some large  
 and Splendid Buildings a Methodist and Catholic Church Show well. a Great  
 Business place, but the Streets dirty, and just now filled with Californians  
 a great deal of drinking, Gambling, Shooting each other, Small Pox Cholera  
 etc going on, the River a little larger than the Illinois and all Streams in  
 this Country So Muddy you cant See 1 inch below the Surface

May 1st A Pleasant day Took a Stroll about Town with Uncle Jesse, as we call  
 Jackman cleaned up things about camp, got Supper and went to Bed

May 2 Showers All night heard a Bot Whistle this morning, Ben and Horace went to  
 Town and found; Hughes had come, we got the Oxen and brought the Flour to  
 camp, and before Night had it packed in Sacks, also brought a load of Cran-  
 dalls Things to our camp, his Teams not having come in yet got Supper and  
 in Bed at 8 o clock a Pleasant day

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3 Cloud this morning Commenced Raining at 9 a drizly warm Rain til 11 I  
 wrote to my Wife the Boyes cleaned their Rifles and been trying them. tis  
 now 1 o clock Cloudy but no Rain have gained 5 lbs Since I left Peoria

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4th Rained all Night drizly and Rain all day Slept in the Tent to Guard  
 the things, got chilled and been nearly Sick all day with Headache and  
 Griping of the Bowels. Crandalls Teams came in and camped with us this  
 after noon. our Bacon not arrived yet, went to the Post Office but no  
 Letters.

5th Cloudy this morning clared off towards noon clouded up towards Night  
 and Rained a little learned last Night that our Bacon is put on Shore at  
 Weston 28 miles below here. Hughes left it in charge of Buncard (?) and  
 we expect He will reShip it with his own Freight Have been Sacking meal  
 Making Sacks, Burning Coffee etc to day



6 Sunday Cloudy morning have Shaved and washed and Consulted on the best plan to cross the River as there is about 20 Teams here of the Pioneers and the Ferry blocked up with about 200 more we thing it best to try to hire the Boat and cross in Night 8 o clock in the morning. Would write a Letter to day, but have received but one since I left Home, and have none to answer 3 o clock and Ben is sick Vomits up every thing Hughs wants to Sell out but wants all money down, Out Fits are selling much below cost.

7th Got our Team to the Ferry at Sunrise and found a perfect jam of teams it is now about Sun down and we are the 60th Team from the Boat probably we shall not get over til day after to morrow Hughes is a little better and Ben is well has been a clear day. I have just been to the Post Office Letters for every body but me I am disapointed and out of Patience heard from Home only once since I left it

8th Pleasant day Went down to Weston 63 miles by water 30 by Land. Town the size of Pekin River crooked Timbered with Cottonwood

9 back next day by land Road under the Bluff which is covered with Rock and good Timber. Oak Blk Walnut Honey Locust Lin and Cottonwood again (?) near the River all Cottonwood and large Springs of water gushing from the Bluffs country along the Road about 1/2 in cultivation Got back at Night and found the Team had crossed and gone out 6 miles through good Timber P1 day

10 Pleasant day been packing Bacon and getting to Start. Wrote to my Wife Bought out Hughes etc.

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11 Started at 12 o clock and Traveled 6 miles roads good, Prairie too Rolling for cultivation, little creeks every 1/2 mile with a Strip of Oak Timber Scattering Grass on the Prairie, has been a Pleasant day til 3 o clock we had a heavy Thunder Shower of Rain and Hail, we have got Something of an organization in our company 14 Teams

12 Traveled to day 13 miles to the Catholic Mission among Indians They have 2 or 3 good Farms a mill with an Inclined wheel and about 6 Houses Cloudy in the morning but a pleasant day Prairie Rolling too much so for cultivation little creeks often with a little black Oak on their banks. passed a company burying one of their number who died with cholera Indians Scattered along the Road to sell us mockasen (?)

May 13 Pleasant day Traveled about 20 miles Prairies not so rolling as they were yesterday Saw but little Timber, and that Skirted the creeks we crossed. Grass is up about 6 inches Saw no Indians to day

14 Had a heavy cold Thunder Shower this morning has been cloudy windy and cold all day Prairies more flat but dry and good Soil a little Sandy Traveled 16 miles

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15 Cloudy and cooll Prairie all day, a little ascending Just at Night crossed a large creek called Nimmahaw traveled 16 miles. I was on Guard last night and dont feel very well

16 Cloudy but not so cold crossed 2 good sized creeks. Roads good but not so level as yesterday have been traveling on a divide, and the ravines on each side are but a short distance apart, and come almost to the road, and are filled with scrub oaks willows and cottenwood have seen considerable waste land to day Traveled about 18 miles

17 Traveled on the same ridge as yesterday that divide the waters of the Missouri and Kansas rivers. Cloudy til nearly night prairie and roads good crossed a number small creeks, and just at night crossed the big blue river 120 ft wide and 2-1/2 deep. Gravelly bottom and a bluish clear stream, a narrow strip of Hackberry Elm cottenwood and willow on east side Clear day. Traveled 20 miles

18 Crossed some small creeks to day but we cross but few to what we see, as they run each way from us we head the most of them I see no wild fruit but grapes plums goose berries and occasionally strawberries Soil good one man in our company sick with the measles cloudy and windy Traveled 18 miles

May 19 Traveled 14 miles Crossed and followed up Wythe Creek 2 miles and camped at 12 o'clock to wash bake etc Heard just at night that the Indians 100 miles ahead have killed 45 men and burned 15 waggons have just held a company meeting and taken more efficient measures for defence I stand guard to night and my beat is on the edge of a ravine 15 ft deep, filled with crab apple plumb trees, and brush.

20 Sunday I slept from sunrise til I was called at 10 o'clock to assist four others in making rules and laws for the company we being a committee chosen for that purpose finished our business about 12 o'clock and as our position was considered a dangerous one we concluded to drive on. We are now 8 miles ahead on a high prairie, a creek (but no timber) a short distance off. have had our supper and it is about sun down Chum walked guard with me last night. I think had there been an Indian near he would have given the alarm. We think our camp ground a good one to night. had a little shower this morning, but it has been a clear day but very windy, it will blow the meat out of a frying pan, and a man has no business with a hat on unless it is tied to his head the wind has been strong from the east and south east the last week.

21 Traveled about 16 miles Crossed little ~~Blue~~ and big Sandy Creeks Timbered with cottenwood and a little white and bur oak Had a small shower this afternoon, cool and windy all day, water poor

22 Cold morning need 2 over coats. Country a little more hilly traveling by the side of little blue river 2 men shot themselves last night one is alive yet Traveled 20 miles.

23 Traveled about 20 miles up the little blue river. prairie good stream from 50 to 80 ft wide and about 6' deep, a small strip of cottenwood Elm willows and occasionally a small cluster of bur oak on its banks Clear but cold day.

24 Cold cloudy day. A thunder shower in the morning crossed the wright fork of little blue Just at night 20 miles ahead.

25 Had a thunder shower that lasted all last night. Rained and blew enough to sweep every thing before it Traveled to day about 20 miles, last 5 miles



within Sight of the Platt roads muddy, from last nights Rain Country all the way from St. Joe's good and dry Has been cold enough the last week to wear an over coat more than half the day, got to the Platt and 5 miles up it, making about 20 miles

There is where he wrote to Charlie May 27th 1849.

26 Travelled about 8 miles near to Fort Childs got Some wood drove off the road and camped about noon and went to cooking it being Saturday, an no wood for miles above (?) cold Cloudy, windy day

27 Sunday (?) have been writing to my Son go to the Fort this afternoon, it is a clear and pleasant day. It is 280 miles from St. Joe to that Fort, but as I have Gussed at the distance each day I made it but 258 but I suppose the good roads and cold weather, account for us traveling faster than I was aware of

28 (?) the Fort this morning, it consists of 8 or 10 one story high, is Situated on the Prairie (?) 1/2 mile from the River and 8 mls below the head of Grand Island, they have Brick house in operation and are preparing to build wood houses. Traveled about 16 miles the Valley this Side the River from 6 to 8 miles wide and from the Bluff it decendes towards the River Bluffs are no more than small hills Pleasant day.

29th Pleasant day. Traveled up the 16 miles. Roads some of the way we mirey. Islands all along, in the River Some of 2 to 3 miles wide and 6 to 8 long, River looks to be 5 miles wide in Some places, and has the appearance of an unburnt Prairie in the Spring. No Timber except on the Islands which is Cottenwood and Willow. Bluffs on the other Side have the appearance of being higher and much nearer the River than on this Side Grass good, and from 6 to 8 miles wide, when the Bluff divides it from the Prairie Grass after ascending the Bluff the you decend onto a Sandy Prairie, and no Timber in Sight

30 Rained hard with Thunder and Lightning all night. it is now 9 o clock and has the appearance of clearing off, if it does we shall start, if not wait til tomorrow. Started at 10 and have come about 15 miles Road wet and muddy cloudy and cold all day Bottom not so wide, but has the apperance of being wider on the other Side Soil better and not so Sandy Islands not so large nor so heavy Timbered. River is high and about 2 miles wide, and within 2 ft of overflowing. Can get water by digging from 2 to 4 ft Capt Giles is Sick with measles.

31 Rained all night and cold enough for 2 overcoats wind N West, had the appearance of clearing up, and we Started at 7 o clock but it soon commenced again, and continuing yet 11 o clock. we have drove about 8 miles and Stopt for all day, in Sight of from 2 to 3 hundred Teams, but there is Grass and water enough for all, but woe to him who has not any thing cooked, and no wood, for there is nothing to cook with Short of 20 miles unless he gets it from the Islands which is a dangerous business we have a plenty

June 1st Pleasant day. roads muddy, but not bad. Traveled 16 miles Bottom grows narrower, and Bluffs higher not So many Islands, saw some Buffalo and Antelope but could not get a Shot at them. Has been a greater variety of Scenery to day, a little Timber on this side the River Cottenwood and Cedar but small.